



National Institute of Justice

S o l i c i t a t i o n

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March 1998

Solicitation for Research and Evaluation on Corrections and Sentencing (1998)

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Solicitation for Research and Evaluation on Corrections and Sentencing (1998)

I. Introduction

This request for proposals announces a third year of support for research and evaluation that will provide further understanding about correctional policies and programs, sentencing, and impacts related to sentencing legislation. Support for this research and evaluation program is provided under the Violent Offender Incarceration and Truth-in-Sentencing Acts (Title II, Subtitle A) of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, as amended. The request responds to Congressional and public demand for a knowledge base that examines correctional policy, accountability in sentencing and recommendations for improvements. This third year of funding will support up to \$4,500,000 in projects that will complement the previously funded national evaluation of the primary sentencing initiatives in the Act. Applications are sought for impact studies, practitioner-researcher partnerships, and topical research projects that will contribute to the understanding of the impact and effectiveness of State, local and tribal correctional issues and sentencing initiatives that are generalizable to other jurisdictions. A list of suggested topics is included on the next page—further details are provided in the remainder of this request for proposals.

II. Background

The Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, as amended, (the Act) has advanced a multifaceted approach to violent crime, including changes in Federal penalties for crimes and incentive programs for State and local jurisdictions. Under Title II, Subtitle A, of the Act, most State and local correctional systems received Violent Offender Incarceration and Truth-in-Sentencing Incentive (VOI/TIS) Grant funds in FY96 and FY97. Additional funds will

be distributed in FY 98. These funds are to be used to expand capacity to incarcerate violent offenders with more certainty and to ensure that at least 85% of the length of each sentence for Uniform Crime Report Part I violent crimes is actually served. Provisions for authorization of grants to Native American Tribes to construct correctional facilities on tribal lands are also authorized under this Act. A provision added with the FY 1997 appropriation requires States to have a program of drug testing, intervention, and sanctions to receive funding in FY 1999 and beyond (PL 104-208, 110 Stat. 3009, H.R. 3610), as well as a baseline data reporting program to measure the impact of random testing procedures.

The Office of Justice Programs (OJP)/ Corrections Program Office (CPO) administers the VOI/TIS grant program. The VOI/TIS grant program provides funds for States to undertake correctional expansion to increase the likelihood that a convicted violent offender will serve time in prison and that time served as a fraction of sentence length will be increased. Funds can be used to build or expand correctional facilities for violent offenders or for non-violent offenders to free space for violent offenders or to build or expand jails. Funds may also be used for privatization to meet these purposes.

Grants for construction of correctional facilities on tribal lands are available from the Corrections Program Office (CPO) to Native American Tribes to address the shortage of adequate correctional facilities on tribal lands. Most existing detention facilities are 20 to 30 years old and do not meet standards for accreditation. The concurrent

jurisdiction that tribes share with the Federal courts allows tribes to refer the most serious offenders to the U.S. attorneys for prosecution. U.S. attorneys are also responsible for prosecuting most felony and some misdemeanor crimes in Indian country. Tribal justice systems are generally the most appropriate institution for maintaining order in tribal communities, but tribal courts need access to adequate detention and correctional facilities on tribal lands to effectively address offenders' crime.

A portion of the overall funds authorized under the VOI/TIS program has been set aside for the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) to assess and evaluate the outcomes of the VOI/TIS program and research major issues in the area of corrections and sentencing that will improve the ability of State and tribal jurisdictions to achieve program goals.

In FY96 and FY97, NIJ issued a "Solicitation for Proposals to Evaluate and Research Sentencing Reforms and Their Effects on Corrections." Each of these solicitations encouraged proposals for projects of three types: Impact Evaluations, Topical Research and Evaluation, and Practitioner-Researcher Partnerships. Additionally, a national evaluation of the primary sentencing initiatives in the Act, including Truth In Sentencing and Violent Offender Incarceration, was funded in FY96.

In collaboration with the CPO and consultation with correctional practitioners, sentencing policymakers, and researchers, the NIJ continues to identify key research questions and policy needs that should be addressed by the research community in order to maximize the lessons learned from projects funded under the Act and to provide feedback on strategies for addressing changes in sentencing policy to State, local and tribal jurisdictions. The following section identifies the areas of research and evaluation that are of interest to the NIJ and the CPO.

VOI/TIS TOPICS:

- Impact on correctional admissions, or on time served/length of stay.
- Impact on prison release and release procedures.
- Impact on the long term offender.
- Impact on inmate population.
- Impact on inmate classification systems.
- Impact on services delivered.
- Impact on time credits and inmate discipline.
- Impact on prison safety, order and discipline.
- Impact on delivery of prison health care.
- Impact of an aging prison population.
- Impact on correctional practices.
- Impact on the organization and management of correctional systems/institutions.
- Impact on correctional staff.
- Impact of use and growth of SuperMax prisons.
- Issues surrounding the use of privatization to expand capacity.
- Impact of violent juveniles sentenced as adults.
- Impact on juvenile justice systems.
- Impact on criminal justice system cost.
- Impact on sentencing statutes, policy and practice.
- Impact on courts and prosecutors.
- Impact on plea bargaining.
- Impact on criminal justice system responses to crime and punishment.
- States' efforts at freeing up bed space to incarcerate violent offenders.
- Impact on community corrections.
- Impacts as they relate to race, gender and ethnicity.
- Impact on communities, neighborhoods and families.
- Impact on reducing recidivism and other common measures of success.
- Impact on crime, crime patterns and crime rates.
- Impact on the rights and needs of crime victims.

TRIBAL TOPICS:

- Examination and assessment of the effectiveness of culturally appropriate programming and intermediate sanctions for adults and youth under tribal jurisdiction.
- Examination and assessment of culturally appropriate sanctioning approaches.
- Intended and unintended outcomes of sanctioning.
- Assessment of case management, criminal justice history information, and crime statistics in tribal justice systems.
- Appropriate security accommodations.
- Significance of aftercare and supervision in the treatment of Indian juvenile and adult criminal offenders.
- Assessment of sex offender treatment programs in Indian country, including probation and monitoring.
- Assessment of tribal prosecution and coordination of tribal-federal prosecution strategies on sexual offenses.
- Role of the tribe and extended family in tribal justice administration, sanction, and intervention.
- Innovative correctional and rehabilitative facility design for Indian country.

III. Areas of Research Required

For a large number of citizens, sentencing policy and correctional practices have failed to meet expectations. In response, Federal and State governments enacted various legislation. The VOI/TIS program is intended to restore integrity to the sentencing process by increasing the likelihood that a convicted violent offender will serve time in prison and that time served as a fraction of sentence length will increase.

New public policy questions about correctional programs and sentencing arise every year. This solicitation seeks to develop knowledge about correctional policy and practice and sentencing issues. Proposals are sought in the following areas: (A) corrections-related research resulting

from the implementation of the VOI/TIS program (such as an evaluation of the impact on facility operations and management, on the impact of privatization, and the impact on crime and crime rates); (B) topical research and evaluation that will improve State, local, and tribal correctional practices and related sentencing policy; and (C) practitioner-researcher partnerships that will stimulate the formulation of lasting partnerships to address important questions related to corrections and sentencing policy.

A. Impact Evaluations

Many State legislators are concerned that changes in sentencing policy such as "three strikes" or "truth in sentencing" will result in runaway costs that will severely affect the State's ability to manage correctional facilities. Managing increased numbers of offenders due to changes in sentencing and release policies is also a concern of corrections policymakers and practitioners.

Research proposals are being solicited that will examine the organization and management of correctional facilities, and measure the impact of changes in sentencing policies both retrospectively and prospectively. Areas of interest include the impact of changes in sentencing practice on the organization and management of correctional facilities and on length of stay.

NIJ anticipates funding multiple awards totaling up to \$1.5 million for research in this section of the solicitation.

A-1. Impact on Correctional Management and Operations. A potential impact of VOI/TIS legislation is on the management and organization of correctional facilities. Because of changes in prisoner flow resulting from legislation and the prevailing 'do more with less' atmosphere in many state, local and tribal jurisdictions, correctional facilities have had to undergo major changes in

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both management philosophy and organizational structure.

NIJ is soliciting proposals that will study organizational impacts of the VOI/TIS legislation in an effort to provide assistance to State, local and tribal jurisdictions whose correctional facilities are dealing with the correctional impacts of sentencing reform resulting from these new laws. Funded studies should be comparative in scope, assessing both VOI/TIS and non-VOI/TIS States, and the research should encompass several methodologies.

Potential research questions include but are not limited to the following:

- What changes in correctional policies and practices, including changes in physical plant, are required to manage inmates who have been given longer sentences and less "gain time" opportunities? How were these changes implemented and what was their impact?
- What administrative techniques or organizational interventions are being established to manage efficiently increases in the numbers of violent offenders confined?
- What methods are being implemented to provide for the safety of correctional officers when they are required to provide custodial care for a larger number of violent offenders and/or a more violent offender population?
- What issues are involved in implementing and operating "super-max" facilities for difficult to manage offenders? Research that describes these prisons in terms of their numbers, operations and programs, staffing patterns, costs and roles within the larger correctional systems are desirable. Special attention should be given to: a) describing the types of offenders in "super max" facilities; b) examining the relevant inmate

classification, intake, transfer, and release processes and mechanisms in these facilities; and c) addressing the cost-effectiveness of these facilities in terms of their impacts on levels of prison violence, safety, and inmate recidivism.

Proposals should address impacts, including impacts on costs.

A-2. Impact of Privatization. VOI/TIS funds can be used by States to lease beds in private correctional facilities and to contract with the private sector for the construction or operation of correctional facilities. States are currently exploring the cost-effectiveness of private facilities. Relatively little evaluation has been done to assess either the impact or the cost-effectiveness of private correctional operations.

NIJ solicits proposals that will provide policymakers and correctional managers much-needed information in the area of privatization. Specific topics of interest include, but are not limited to, the following:

- What is the extent of privatization? Why does privatization develop? What types of services and operations are the most developed and extensive? What new privately provided services and operations are emerging? What areas of correctional management and operations are not typically available or sought from private providers?
- How do supervision issues differ between public and private facilities? Do different supervision issues arise concerning State versus private inmates?
- What are the incentive structures for privately provided correctional services? What issues arise concerning the monitoring of the contract between the State and the service provider? For instance, how and for

what performance measures are contractors held accountable?

- How do private facilities and/or services compare to public facilities/services?
Possible comparisons include the populations being served, provision of services and programs, inmate and officer safety, levels of infractions, length of stay, and management of escapes and riots.
- How do the costs of public and private facilities compare and what criteria and/or performance measures are used to make this comparison? Does any cost advantage change over time?
- How are private industries operating in private facilities? Who benefits?

A- 3. Impact on Length of Stay. One of the major questions about Truth-in -Sentencing (TIS) initiatives continues to be: "Has TIS had an impact on length of stay in correctional facilities?". Currently, there exists no adequate way to compare how length of stay has varied before, during, and after the implementation of TIS initiatives or to assess the relationship between any changes in length of stay and the TIS initiatives.

Proposals are requested for studies to develop algorithms and methodologies to estimate length of stay (LOS) and changes in LOS over time. The proposed research should be developed across States with different sentencing structures (including both TIS and non-TIS) but is not limited to and should include different correctional facility types (e.g., State and local). Other factors that should be considered in developing the approach include changes in crime patterns, arrest policies, and sentencing policies and strategies. While TIS is the main effect under study, there may be other confounding factors that need to be assessed,

including management policy, facility capacity, and community reactions. Because of the significance of this component of the study, potential confounding factors should be outlined in the proposal for inclusion into the model.

A-4. Impact on Crime and Crime Rates. The effects of VOI/TIS legislation on crime, especially violent crime, are clearly broad, complex issues, with no simple or immediate answers. Nonetheless, the importance of this issue leads NIJ to solicit research on this topic. Time series methodologies are the most readily apparent approach but their utility may be reduced by the recency of the implementation of VOI/TIS. Therefore, NIJ is interested in innovative, expeditious approaches as well as traditional methodologies which may take longer to come to fruition. Potential topics include but are not limited to whether the removal of a "critical mass" of offenders in a given locality is necessary for affecting crime; the relative importance of individual rates of offending; the interplay of incapacitation and deterrence; and the relationship between crime, clearance rates, and law enforcement initiatives. Research would be appropriate at the State, local or tribal level, including a focus on communities or neighborhoods if possible. It may be appropriate to combine research on the effect of VOI/TIS on crime with research on its effect on other aspects of communities, neighborhoods and families.

A-5. Impact on Community, Neighborhoods, and Family. Changes in sentencing and commitment policies affect the flow of offenders into and out of communities. Some neighborhoods and communities, for example, are experiencing the removal of a substantial number of individuals, typically young adult males, for significant periods of time. In other jurisdictions, however, individuals who previously would have been sentenced to incarceration may now be serving time under community supervision. The effects of removal of individuals from communities, neighborhoods and families is

poorly understood. To the extent that these individuals may have made positive contributions through their roles as financial providers, role models or caretakers, their removal may prove detrimental to the community, neighborhood or family, particularly in locations in which a sizable fraction of individuals has been removed through incarceration. Alternatively, many of the individuals in question may have – in addition to committing one or more serious or violent offenses – been disruptive influences, negative role models, or financial drains. To the extent that these negative aspects outweigh the positive, removal of such individuals may benefit the community, neighborhood or family.

Finally, the relationships of offenders under community supervision to their community, neighborhood or family is also not well understood, nor is the potential relationship and contribution of criminal justice system oversight and services to enhancing the positive aspects of those relationships. NIJ is interested in research that looks at these issues in a balanced and comprehensive manner.

B. Topical Research and Evaluation

In addition to encouraging proposals on corrections, and impacts of sentencing, this solicitation seeks proposals on specific topics. Each of these topics merits research and evaluation to establish its efficacy, to identify possible improvements, and to determine ultimate contribution to State and local policy and practice.

NIJ anticipates supporting 8 to 10 grants totaling up to \$1.5 million under this section.

Many issues in corrections and sentencing persist regardless of the correctional philosophy of a given jurisdiction or sentencing paradigm. Questions of public safety, program effectiveness, costs, and fairness are of continuing interest. Additionally, State and local professionals are

continually searching for information that identifies which policies work best for which populations.

In keeping with its mission of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of criminal justice systems, NIJ is soliciting research and evaluation that will improve State, local, and tribal operations as they strive to implement the Act's intent. The scope of research and evaluation of interest under this solicitation extends from prosecution to parole.

The essential criterion of eligibility for funding is that the research and evaluation results improve State, local, and tribal correctional practices and related sentencing policy. Award decisions will be strongly influenced by determinations of policy relevance (in addition to technical merit), and applicants bear the responsibility of articulating the anticipated contributions of their proposed research to policy.

NIJ's broad substantive areas of interest include, but are not limited to, proposals that address correctional policy and practice, and sentencing as they impact (1) victim issues and concerns; (2) the sentenced offender; (3) unintended consequences of sentencing policy; (4) tribal justice (5) court-related issues; and (6) public attitudes about integrity of the justice system. These are described in the sections below.

B-1. Victim Issues and Concerns. As greater attention focuses on the impact of crime on victims, the harm inflicted, and offender accountability, the role of sentencing and corrections in the process of restoring victims has become more significant. Some relevant topic areas include victim impact statements, victim notification systems, and balancing the rights of victims and offenders. Examples of issues for consideration under these five topics are described below.

- *Victim Services.* What types of victim assistance programs do correctional facilities provide? If services are not provided, is this a result of statutory limitations? Are services available to specific types of victims, such as children under the age of 12, elderly persons, and commercial establishments? Are services available for offenders who also are victims? Are victims aware of the existence of these programs? How do they find out about them? Are these services considered useful? What are the impacts of these programs?
- *Victim Impact Statements.* When and how are victim impact statements used? Are different formats (e.g., written, verbal, audiotape, videotape) accepted? At what stage of the criminal justice process are they utilized? How are they incorporated in different sentencing structures? What effect do they have on prosecutor and/or sentencing decisions?
- *Victim Restitution and Community Service.* When are offenders required to provide restitution to victims or their families, or engage in some form of community service? What types of sanctions are beneficial to the victim, and/or the community?
- *Victim Notification Systems.* Are correctional facilities, prosecutors, and courts implementing victim notification systems? How effective are they? Are victims satisfied with this service?
- *Balancing Victim and Offender Rights.* How are the rights of victims, such as the right to information about the offender's case, disposition, sentence, and release, balanced with the due process rights of offenders? What impact, if any, do victims rights "watch-dog" groups have on sentencing or prosecution practices?

B-2. The Sentenced Offender. Sentencing policies and practices are intended to punish for past crimes and to prevent future offending. Many different sanctions and interventions – ranging from imprisonment through unsupervised release – are employed to accomplish these objectives. Imprisonment prevents crimes that an offender would have committed had he/she been free, but imprisonment is expensive. Also, advocates and critics disagree about the impact of incarceration on an offender's propensity to commit crimes after release. Unsupervised probation or suspended sentences are less expensive; but, there is disagreement about whether these sanctions offer the assurance that the convicted offenders will desist from future criminal behavior.

Much correctional research and evaluation over the past decade has sought to understand the effectiveness of the range of available sentencing and supervisory options. Many professionals in the correctional field believe that cost-effective alternatives to both imprisonment and unsupervised probation exist and that it is possible to devise sanctions that punish offenders, safeguard the public, and minimize the burden on taxpayers. Moreover, many correctional professionals advocate weaving these sanctions into an integrated sentencing system that offers judges a greater range of options in choosing sanctions which are specific and appropriate to the offender's circumstances. Understanding how these "intermediate" sanctions affect different offenders, what they achieve, and how they can be integrated into overall State sentencing schema are central goals of this solicitation.

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The topics listed below illustrate the range of NIJ's interests in research that focuses on the sentenced offender in the context of sentencing reform.

- Impact of VOI/TIS on the numbers and characteristics of offenders under local community supervision.
- Impact of VOI/TIS on the use of graduated and intermediate sanctions.
- Integration of VOI/TIS within structured sentencing, sentencing guidelines, and the processes by which these guidelines are developed.
- New correctional sanctions including those that focus public policy on the offender and not on the sanction. For example, under the First-time Offender Waiver in the State of Washington, "the court is given broad discretion in setting the sentence," because judges may disregard otherwise applicable guidelines in sentencing qualifying offenders.
- Treatment interventions for substance abusers, sex offenders, the "dual diagnosed," and domestic violence perpetrators (batterers).
- Role of programs in prisons, including treatment, training and in-prison work programs, both for population management and for rehabilitation.
- Impact of sanctions on recidivism and other outcome measures.
- Youthful offenders housed in adult facilities, their needs, and the correctional management issues raised by their presence.
- Practices to accommodate increasing numbers of older offenders and women

offenders and the correctional management issues raised by their presence.

- Changes in procedures and practices governing the release of inmates from prison to the community, including post-release supervision, and their consequences.

B-3. Tribal Justice. NIJ solicits proposals to respond to the critical need to assess tribal correctional facilities in order to provide policymakers with information to ensure appropriate short and long term placement options for offenders under tribal jurisdictions. Specific topics of interest include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Examination and assessment of the existence and effectiveness of culturally appropriate programming and intermediate sanctions for adults and youth, under tribal jurisdictions.
- Innovative correctional and rehabilitative facility design for Indian country.
- Role of the tribe, clan, or kinship networks and extended family in tribal justice administration, sanctioning, and intervention.
- Assessment of prosecution and coordination of tribal-federal prosecution strategies on the adjudication of sexual offenses.
- Assessment of sex offender treatment programs in Indian country, including the role of supervision and monitoring.
- Significance of aftercare and supervision in Indian country in the treatment of juvenile and adult criminal offenders.
- Appropriate security accommodations.
- Examination of the existence and assessment of culturally appropriate sanctioning approaches.

- Relationships between alcohol, substance abuse, and criminal behavior.

B-4. Unintended Consequences of Sentencing Policy.

The intended consequences of sentencing policy are to meet such goals as punishment, public safety, deterrence, and rehabilitation. Traditional studies of these goals emphasize potential crimes averted, public perceptions of justice and punitiveness, program costs, costs of alternative sanctions, offender recidivism, and an array of broader social costs. It is possible, however, that traditional methods have overlooked or ignored other relevant outcomes of sentencing processes.

NIJ solicits research on potentially important unintended outcomes that clearly defines the consequences under study and their specific links to sentencing policies. Research conducted in this area should objectively present unintended consequences as potential tradeoffs to be considered in developing sentencing policies rather than as necessary or unnecessary results of sentencing practice. Examples of possible studies include but are not limited to:

- Assessing long-term cumulative health care and other public financial obligations created by "life without parole" types of sentencing. Particular focus should be given to real or expectant increases in the number of older inmates usually serving longer sentences, mandatory sentences, and life sentences.
- Assessing the impact of racial, ethnic and gender differences in offending patterns in the sentencing process.
- Assessing the impacts of significant numbers of young male offenders from specific communities, neighborhoods, and families. Assessing the impact of the rise in the number of women in prison on communities, neighborhoods and families.

- Assessing the extent to which correctional expenditures are diverting State and local resources from other domestic priorities.

B-5. Courts-Related Issues. The laws and finances that comprise a State's overall sentencing policies affect the administration of justice by the courts.

NIJ solicits research on court issues as they relate to sentencing policy. Some illustrations of court-related issues include but are not limited to the following:

- Assessing the impact of mandatory sentences on plea bargaining, trial rates, courts, offenders and sentencing.
- Assessing equivalent sanctions, including for example, identifying "exchange tradeoffs" among intermediate sanctions such as fines, split sentences, boot camps, or mandatory jail treatment.
- Describing the impact of VOI/TIS on the roles and expectations of legal actors (prosecutors, defense attorneys, and judges) in the courts, and on the charging and plea bargaining practices.
- Evaluating the impacts of sentencing policy on the provision of indigent defense services and the implications for the court.
- Assessing efforts to "free up" beds for violent offenders through approaches such as restorative justice.
- Assessing the impact of VOI/TIS beyond courts and corrections, especially in other criminal justice systems. For instance, has VOI/TIS increased the burden for community corrections as offenders are released from custody to make room for violent offenders?

B-6. Public Attitudes About The Integrity Of The Justice System. The attitudes and views of the public with respect to appropriate levels of punishment and other goals of sentencing are an important input into the policymaking process so that policymakers can be responsive to public sentiments. NIJ encourages studies that will assess public perceptions of and attitudes concerning sentencing issues. Topics for consideration include appropriate levels of sentencing for violent versus property versus drug offenders; appropriate sentences for white-collar criminals; role of alternatives to incarceration; and attitudes toward restitution, fines, and payment for supervision.

B-7. Other Research and Evaluation Topics. The topics mentioned under the headings above are only illustrative of the research and evaluation that NIJ encourages under this solicitation. They are offered to illustrate the kinds of questions to be considered rather than to define the entire scope of useful studies. In developing topics, applicants should assess and explain their likely contributions to understanding the effects of sentencing and correctional policies and practices on the criminal justice system and on society at large.

C. Practitioner-Researcher Partnerships

An essential part of NIJ's overall evaluation strategy is the development of greater research and evaluation capacity within State and local criminal justice systems in order to increase data-driven decisionmaking and policy development. While rigorous topical research and evaluations conducted in other jurisdictions offer valuable insights for practitioners in correctional agencies across the country, they lack the contextual relevance of research and evaluation conducted on their own specific programs and policies. Recognizing that most operational agencies do not have substantial in-house research and evaluation expertise, NIJ encourages partnerships between these agencies and research institutions

that can provide such expertise specifically tailored to meet State and local needs. The purpose of these NIJ-supported partnerships is to stimulate collaborative efforts that will develop into lasting productive relationships.

NIJ anticipates funding multiple awards totaling \$1.5 million for research in this section.

As the partners initiate a collaboration in the development of a proposal to NIJ, they should consider together these factors:

- What should your partnership look like?
- How will your partnership be supported?
- What organizational, professional, and financial factors constitute a lasting relationship?
- How should a successful partnership be measured over time?

The primary objective of these partnerships must be to explore how State correctional and sentencing policies and practices are best implemented within the context of State or local agencies. Applicants must explain how their efforts will improve the understanding of the implementations or impacts of correctional and sentencing policies, both formal and informal.

Both sentencing and corrections partnerships can be formed. These partnerships may be newly formed in response to this solicitation or they may build on an existing relationship between researchers and practitioners. The applicant may be either the practitioner agency or the research agency or academic institution. Applications from jurisdictions of all sizes are encouraged.

A wide range of partnerships may be supported under this solicitation. State prison officials may wish to study new forms of programming for

long-term offenders. Community-based corrections agencies might evaluate new ways of expanding prison capacity for violent offenders through special security programs for higher-risk offenders. A research organization may team with a sentencing commission to assess efforts to integrate intermediate sanctions within existing guidelines. Correctional and sentencing research partnerships may also include other relevant State, local or tribal government agencies or private service providers. It is critical that the application reflect a genuine collaboration between researchers and practitioners regardless of who may have initiated the effort, and should focus on helping practitioners develop measurable outcomes of the success of their programs and strategies. The application must clearly demonstrate a commitment to the partnership on the part of all parties involved.

Funding under this section is intended to support the establishment of the partnerships, the collaborative development of a policy relevant research agenda, the development of measurable indicators of program accomplishments (especially those that can become integral parts of correctional agency operations), and the completion of at least one collaborative research project. The application must include a task outline that includes a schedule for the completion of the key tasks over the course of the project.

The project should include one or more questions or issues to be addressed through the partnership. The completion of a specific research or evaluation effort is required. Documentation of the development of the partnership is critical. Therefore, the application must include a plan to create a system to record the establishment, development, and achievement of the research collaboration.

Also, proposals should indicate how the partnership is anticipated to continue at the conclusion of Federal funding. Existing

partnerships or collaborations should make clear the additional benefits to be derived from Federal support, as NIJ monies are expected to fund new activities and not to supplement current research and evaluation resources. Funding will be provided for up to 24 months.

IV. How to Apply

Those interested in submitting proposals in response to this solicitation must complete the required application forms and submit related required documents. (See below for how to obtain application forms and guides for completing proposals.) Applicants must include the following information/forms to qualify for consideration:

- Standard Form (SF) 424—application for Federal assistance
- Assurances
- Certifications Regarding Lobbying, Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (one form)
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
- Budget Detail Worksheet
- Budget Narrative
- Negotiated indirect rate agreement (if appropriate)
- Names and affiliations of all key persons from applicant and subcontractor(s), advisors, consultants, and advisory board members. Include name of principal investigator, title, organizational affiliation (if any), department (if institution of higher education), address, phone, and fax
- Proposal abstract
- Table of contents
- Program narrative or technical proposal
- Privacy certificate
- References
- Letters of cooperation from organizations collaborating in the research project
- Résumés
- Appendixes, if any (e.g., list of previous NIJ awards, their status, and products [in NIJ or other publications])

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Proposal abstract. The proposal abstract, when read separately from the rest of the application, is meant to serve as a succinct and accurate description of the proposed work. Applicants must concisely describe the research goals and objectives, research design, and methods for achieving the goals and objectives. Summaries of past accomplishments are to be avoided, and proprietary/confidential information is not to be included. Length is not to exceed 400 words. Use the following two headers:

Project Goals and Objectives:

Proposed Research Design and Methodology:

Page limit. The number of pages in the “Program Narrative” part of the proposal must not exceed **30 double-spaced pages**.

Due date. Completed proposals **must be received** at the National Institute of Justice by the close of business on **June 29, 1998**. Extensions of this deadline will not be permitted.

Award period. In general, NIJ limits its grants and cooperative agreements to a maximum period of 12 or 24 months. However, longer budget periods may be considered.

Applying. Two packets need to be obtained: (1) application forms (including a sample budget worksheet) and (2) guidelines for submitting proposals (including requirements for proposal writers and requirements for grant recipients). To receive them, applicants can:

- Access the Justice Information Center on the web:

<http://www.ncjrs.org/fedgrant.htm#nij>

or the NIJ web site:

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm>

These web sites offer the NIJ application forms and guidelines as electronic files that may be downloaded to a personal computer.

- Request hard copies of the forms and guidelines by mail from the National Criminal

Justice Reference Service at 800–851–3420 or from the Department of Justice Response Center at 800–421–6770 (in the Washington, D.C., area, at 202–307–1480).

- Request copies by fax. Call 800–851–3420 and select option 1, then option 1 again for NIJ. Code is 1023.

Guidance and information. Applicants who wish to receive additional guidance and information may contact the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at 800–421–6770. Center staff can provide assistance or refer applicants to an appropriate NIJ professional. Applicants may, for example, wish to discuss their prospective research topics with the NIJ professional staff.

Send completed forms to:

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National Institute of Justice
810 Seventh Street NW
Washington, DC 20531
[overnight courier ZIP code 20001]

For more information on the National Institute of Justice, please contact:

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